A Study of Nadia Hashimi's Selected Novels with Reference to Linguistic Relativity Theory

A Ph. D. Research Proposal

Submitted to

Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded

For the registration of degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in English

Under

Faculty of Humanities

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July, 2022

Synopsis for PhD

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❖ Introduction

The main function of language is to enable speakers and writers to create a picture of reality and to make sense of their experience of what goes on around them. Language is a system and structure. Language is the medium of literature. According to (Pavlenko, 2008), citing (Halliday, 1970) the ideational function "implies that language serves as an instrument for the encoder (speaker, writer) to express and articulate his idea and experience internally." It refers to the conceptualization process involved in our mental activities. Language is the channel through which different notions are explored, shaped, and formed. Language matter with thinking is the correspondence relationship between them; that language does not constrain thought.

The present study intends to expose those different frameworks of the linguistic relativity theory in relation to the linguistic and cultural notions of the Dari Afghan language via analyzing the culture enriched selected novels. Significant research had been done on culture, language and thought dependently and otherwise and it has proven that one may not stand without the other (Adekunle,2015). A linguistic analysis on the use of language and cultural tenets in the novels will be studied in order to ascertain and testify the Sapir-Whorfian Hypothesis validity in the form of fiction. It is a reality that varied languages speakers and thinkers make various predictions for the nature of the relationship between language and thought (Pavlenko, 2005).

Whorf (1956) points out: The background linguistic system (in other words, the grammar) of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the programme and guide for the individual's mental activity. Language as a tool of expressing ideas may correspond with another language, but it is apparent that its impact differs in shaping the speaker's thoughts and beliefs; thought and language constitute the people's thinking and views of the world. The true nature of Afghan culture and identity is explored through their way of living and maintaining their relationship even though they lived in different countries and circumstances (Tiwari, 2021). In Andresen's study Linguistics and evolution: A developmental approach; (2013), he moved from a study of static, 'Thought and Language' to a dynamic 'Thinking for Speaking' to illustrate the relationship of thought and language. Therefore, to suggest that the confusion in the use of labels correlates is confusion in how applied conceptual or theoretical empirical works are concluded. This study conveyed a new different glance for the linguistic relativity in the field of literature.

❖ Aims and Objectives of the Study

Linguistic analysis of literature simplifies the works of literature into compilations of language units. Thus, the works lose their beauty because the analysis put too much emphasis on the investigation of the language units and neglect the value of literature as an artwork. The text is the main concern of the linguist (Firth, 1968, p. 90) at the same time it is the main product of the author in literature. The importance of involving linguistic analysis to literature lies in examining the linguistic features of a text which can contribute a great deal to the readers' understanding. The reason behind paying attention to the linguistic study of literature emerges from the fact that any literary work is a piece of

language. Yet the goal of linguistic analysis is to understand the content of the text. The purpose of the present study is—

1. To investigate the various aspect of linguistic analysis in literature, particularly novels by Nadia Hashmi.
2. To find out the feasibility of the literary features and terminology that helps and insists on the linguistic relativity validity as a linguistic theory that are employed by the novelist within her works.
3. To examine, analyze and interpret the selected novels as an investigation at all possible levels of a language and style.
4. To find out the social and cultural characterizations in the Afghani literature that help to frame the writer's unique style.
5. To investigate if there is any existence of Linguistic Theory in the field of literature particularly in real fiction.
6. To spotlight to which extend the literary features are used by Nadia Hashmi in her select novels which prove the provision of the Linguistic Relativity Theory.

The present study aims to explore the social-cultural factors within the works of Nadia Hashimi and its relation to the language used within the texts and how it shapes the writer's thoughts and beliefs.

❖ **Nature & Scope of the Study: The Conceptual Framework:**

This study spotlights on linguistic investigation for the literary texts. It is to investigate, analyze, examine, and reveal the validity of the linguistic relativity as a linguistic theory rather than hypothesis in the selected novels of Nadia Hashimi. It is not analyzing the novels critically rather than linguistically. The linguistic relativity hypothesis has very severe consequences because it posits that initial thought categories which are culturally enacted and not independently inherent in reality (Pinker, 2007, p. 12).

❖ **Literature Review:**

This unique study does not shed light on those novels critically as pieces of literature, but it investigates the selected novels linguistically as the only study for such novels; as there is not any linguistic investigation is found for them. The researcher has done the close reading of all the related available articles, theses, and other printed and online sources as explored for those novels. Some of them are:

Seswita Seswit in her article; *Bacha Posh: A Cultural Practice in Afghanistan as Seen in Nadia Hashimi's The Pearl That Broke Its Shell:* Resilience against Patriarchy article also depicts the ideology behind the Bacha Posh by showing its positive impact, which gives the girls the opportunity to support the family income by having a job, having a long-term chance at school, and pursuing their dreams for a better life. In this article she shows Bacha Posh is a cultural phenomenon where a young girl is dressed and raised as a boy until she reaches a marriageable age or puberty by a family with no sons for the sake of a better future. It is an attempt to expose the Afghani culture through the use of such words and terminology particularly found in Afghani Language and reflects the culture impact on individuals as well as society.

Anwesa Chattopadhyay in the paper "*At the Crossroads of Central Asia*": Analyzing the Varied Aspects of Afghan Society and Its Representation in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* and Nadia Hashimi's *When The moon is Low*; a literary representation. In this paper the purpose is to analyze the varied facets of Afghan society in terms of its literary representations in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* (2003) and Nadia Hashimi's *When the Moon is Low* (2015).

Another study is done by Kaisarjahan M Ansari "*Trauma of Being Nothingness*" in Nadia Hashimi's "*The Pearl That Broke Its Shell* & Kamila

Shamsie's "*Salt and Saffron*". In this study, the researcher attempts to unravel the inner alienation that sustain through specific discourses and events occurring in the lives of the characters and their various cultures. The composite term used for this study is 'Trauma' which refers to a specific kind of awareness among the victims of cultures and its people (Ansari, 2019).This study unravels the traumatic tension on individual group of people and their cultures.

Naily Syiva Fauzia and Anik Cahyaning Rahayu in their paper "*Women's Struggle Against Patriarchy*: An Analysis of Radical Feminism through Nadia Hashimi's *A House Without Windows"* tried to describe the struggle of Afghanistan women in gaining opportunities to move forward in their society. The study insists on the strong self-awareness and determination as reflected from the female characters where it is the women primary step to get rid of male domination and to proceed in their lives as well as in their society.

Chandrama Swain and Jaya Dwived in their paper "*Bacha Posh, the Female Sons of Afghanistan*: A Critical Study with Reference to Selected Works of Nadia Hashimi" traces the psychological, social, biological, and cultural complexities involved in the practice of Bacha Posh with reference to selected works of Afghan American writer Nadia Hashimi. This paper tries to analyze the restrictive and repressive aspects as well as the protective and provocative aspects of the practice of Bacha Posh as a cultural movement in Afghani identity.

Garima Singh in the chapter "*Afghan Women Authors' Discourses of Resistance*: Contesting Interplay between Gender, Place, and Identity"; in the book entitled: *Gender, Place, and Identity of South Asian Women* examined the works of Afghanistan's female authors' writings to understand the discursive identity construction concerning the appropriation of relational (i.e. symbolic) space. To accomplish this aim, the chapter focuses on four novels by female

writers: Nadia Hashimi's *Sparks Like Stars* (2021), Homeira Qaderi's *Dancing in the Mosque* (2020), Fawzia Koofi's *The Favored Daughter* (2012), and Atia Abawi's *The Secret Sky* (2014). Drawing upon Michel Foucault's techniques of discourse analysis, the chapter seeks to delineate the dominant and the contested discourses on how resistance is enumerated and change is initiated by the female characters in the novel (Singh, 2022).

Mallika Tiwari in her thesis "*The Restoration of Jeopardized Identity in the Works of Khaled Hosseini and Nadia Hashimi*" developed to find the answers of; what are the threats to life in Afghanistan as depicted by the selected writers and, how the people grapple with identity crisis and threats to their existence. The research is significant as it unlocks the hardships of common people of Afghanistan, and deeply analyzes the struggle of survival against identity crisis and other correlated factors. Today's world is full of awful and violent threats towards human beings, and literary work appears to project and depict the terrible and violent circumstances under which human life is destroyed. Literature represents constantly human circumstances, and we know that the crisis of identity is anything but a challenge to life and well-being (Tiwari, 2021).

Haseena Kabeer's thesis "*Decoding Socio Ethnic Dynamics in the Writings of Khaled Hosseini and Nadia Hashimi*" aimed to explore the social-cultural and ethnic disparity in the works of Khaled Hosseini and Nadia Hashimi. The researcher has discussed with the help of all the characters portrayed in their writings that are painted during the three decades of ruling and how the pre-post war condition has left the country into sheds of tears.

Some other literary works are selected where the researchers analyzed them linguistically on the light of Linguistic Relativity as below:

- *Linguistic Relativity and Cryptographic Translation* in Samuel Delany's Babel-17, Joseph Fitzpatrick, 2020

In this study an interpretations of the Sapir–Whorf Hypothesis as a radical relativism that imagined speakers of different languages as trapped in their separate and incommensurable thought worlds conducted that is, as a theory of untranslatability. This chapter approaches Samuel R. Delany's Babel-17 (1966) as a perceptive working through of the relationship between the Sapir–Whorf Hypothesis and Weaver's ideas about language, information, and translation. By entangling these theories in its plot, Delany had to attend to aspects of them that were rarely addressed by academic critics working within and talking across scholarly disciplines. The novel's insights come not only from Delany's theoretical acumen, but also from his need to think about these theories in terms of character motivation, thematic coherence, and narrative closure.

- *Created Languages in Science Fiction*, Ria Cheyne, 2008

This study explains how the language of science fiction has been the topic of many critical discussions, but the "alien" languages that appear in these texts have received significantly less attention (Cheyne, 2008) .The scholar here proposed a new approach to these languages, setting up a crucial distinction between "constructed" languages (those designed for real-world use) and the "created" languages appearing in fictional texts.

❖ The Research Design and Methodology:

The tentative research design i.e. general chapter scheme of the research study is as follows:

(1) Chapter I: Introduction

(2) Chapter II: Linguistic Relativity Theory and Reflection of Society and Culture through Literature

(3) Chapter III: A Survey of Afghani Literature and Writings of Nadia Hashimi

(4) Chapter IV: A Linguistic Analysis of Nadia Hashimi's Selected Novels

(5) Chapter V: Conclusion

(6) Bibliography

❖ **Research Methodology:**

In literary analysis of Nadia Hashimi's novels, feminism is a paradigm which focuses on the experience of women in natural social setting, where the aim is to 'make women visible, raise their consciousness and empower them. (Holloway & Wheeler, 2013). Unexpectedly, the methodology used in this study can give some guidelines and add a new framework for data analysis to those who wish to use linguistic textual analysis in their research in the future as it is not specified the analysis to those studies which refer to the theory as just an experimentally searchable notion. A linguistic analysis of a literary work in this vein is simple, straight forward, and rests on the main principle that the analyst must examine closely the linguistic choices that have been made for literary reasons by the novelist.

This thesis aims at an analysis of the creation process of the author through identifying her distinct and stylistic patterns through linguistic stylistic and pragmatic approaches. Linguistic analysis refers to the scientific analysis of a language. Textual analysis is a methodology that involves understanding language, symbols, or pictures shown in texts to gain information regarding how people make sense of and communicate life and life experiences.

The approach used in this study is a combination of stylistics and pragmatics that is "The Stylo-Pragmatics". Stylistics interested in analyzing the style of the novelist that used her language to derive the desired meaning or theme of the given texts. The stylistics analysis will be conducted to investigate those unfamiliar expressions within the texts and utterances in the selected novels. Thus, to find out their reflected and thematic linguistic meaning, semantic analysis will be done at the level of social meaning of the texts. It will be focused on the conceptual and associative meaning to get the proper meaning of the sentences. According to Crystal (1999), stylistics is the study of any

situational distinctive use of language and of choice made by individuals and social groups in their usage in all linguistic domains. Stylistics is concerned with the analysis of the linguistic features of texts in relation to their meaning.

On the other hand, pragmatics, to borrow from Mey (2013), studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the condition of society. According to Leech and Short (1987), pragmatic analysis of language seeks to investigate that aspect of meaning which is derived from the way in which utterances are used and how they relate to the context in which they are uttered. In pragmatics analysis, the focus will be on Speech act theory proposed by J. L. Austin (1962) and J. R. Searle (1969) where only five major types of the model will be investigated; assertives, commissives, expressives, directives and declaratives categories that help us to understand the texts in the context of the conversations. The Stylo-Pragmatics analysis is used to examine, identify, and interpret texts by analyzing their content, style, structure, purpose, pattern usage and underlying meanings. It is the approach to the study of meaning that examines the distinctive style together with the intended and contextual meaning of language. Lately in style research, a question that has received much attention is how to attribute meaning to the use of specific linguistic features of style (Agbeleoba, 2020).

The current study is an attempt to analyze the selected novels linguistically; Stylistics and pragmatics analysis will be involved, to recognize the notion behind the linguistic relativity in terms of linguistic devices and any other figures used in fiction to look into how literatures' authors; writers, employ their language and styles in their writings, and if there will be any effect of the language they use on their literary works as well. Linguistic textual analysis in this study is based on the assumption of comprehensive study of the unit concerned; Linguistic Relativity (LR). The social and cultural units here

are to be explored with its relationship to the language factors and its surroundings. The novels that are selected in this study are enriched with social and cultural factors employed by the author. The importance of involving linguistic analysis to literature lies in examining the linguistic features of a text which can contribute a great deal to the readers' understanding. As well as the reason behind paying attention to the linguistic study of literature emerges from the fact that any literary work is a piece of language.

- **Data analysis:**

The study data is collected from the selected novels of Nadia Hashimi. The characters' conversations and social contexts selected are to be analyzed with the help of linguistics models of pragmatics and the stylistics investigation as well.

1. Developing a view about the linguistic theory within literary works.
2. Checking the validity and reliability of the LR as collected data to be regarded in literature linguistically; stylistics, pragmatic study, for the real contexts in which language is used to explore language - thought interaction; in the real texts and sittings and also characters of the selected novels.
3. Decoding the varied resources which support the true concept of the theory through the language used by characters and its impact on their cultural identity.

- **Conclusion:**

This study is conducted to spotlight on the L R theory from a new and different corner. It is an attempt to show that Hashimi' s language is not at all simple, boring or representational but is abstract, complex and powerful to articulate her own viewpoint and reflect her origins and culture. The selected novels will be analyzed linguistically to show either correspondence or dissonance among those linguistic factors within fictional texts in order to

reach new outcomes about the theory validity rather than its existence in the field of fiction writings. This study via the writings of Nadia Hashimi is an attempt to showcase the realities such as the social and ethnic disparities that has clogged the cultural and social aspects of the country. This study aims to show the feasibility of the linguistic features that help and insist on the linguistic relativity validity as a linguistic theory rather than a hypothesis which is clearly proved through the applicable method used in this study. More researches into finding out this theory is conducted, but it is still necessary to extend our knowledge about the theory while it is used in real applicable field such as fictional texts and discourses. The findings will be based on the hypothesis and the select textual analysis. Further studies would be suggested about the topic and would be of interest.

The bibliographical details will be enclosed at the end to substantiate the discussion.

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